

## **BOARD MEETING CONDUCT**

The primary duty of the Regional Board is to protect the quality of waters within the Region for all beneficial uses. This duty is implemented by formulating and adopting water quality plans for specific ground or surface water basins and by prescribing and enforcing requirements on all domestic and industrial waste discharges. Specific responsibilities and procedures of the Regional Water Quality Control Boards and the State Water Resources Control Board are outlined in the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act (Division 7), California Water Code.

The purpose of the meeting is for the Board to obtain input from concerned and affected parties and make decisions after considering the recommendations made by the Executive Officer. The Board will vote only on matters listed on the agenda as action items. The Board may give direction to the Executive Officer on any matter discussed during the meeting.

The Board may also issue contempt sanctions in adjudicatory proceedings. "Adjudicatory proceedings" include all permitting, cleanup and enforcement matters, but do not include basin planning. Any person is subject to the contempt sanction in an adjudicatory proceeding, whether or not the person is a "party" to the matter. The Board can issue contempt citations for the following conduct: obstruction or interruption of the meeting or hearing by any of the following: (1) disorderly, contemptuous, or insolent behavior toward the Board; (2) breach of the peace, boisterous conduct, or violent disturbance; or (3) other unlawful interference with the process or proceedings. Conduct that is not in the Boardroom but that is near the meeting or hearing can also give rise to contempt sanctions. (Ca. Gov. Code sections 11455.10-11455.30; Ca. Code of Civ. Proc. section 128.5; Cal. Code of Regs, tit. 23, sections 648(b), 648.8.)

If the Board decides to impose contempt sanctions, the process is as follows. The Board first makes findings that a person should be cited for contempt. The findings are then referred to a court. The court will issue an order to the person(s) involved to appear before the court and defend the contempt charge. The court then may issue the same types of contempt penalties that would apply in a civil court trial, or dismiss the matter. In addition, the Board can order payment of attorney's fees when any person engages in bad faith actions or tactics that are "frivolous" or solely intended to cause unnecessary delay. In that case, the person engaging in the improper conduct must pay the attorneys fees of any party that result from the conduct. "Frivolous" means totally and completely without merit, or for the sole purpose of harassing another party (including Water Board staff). An order to pay attorney's fees takes effect immediately, does not require court action, and cannot be petitioned to the State Water Board.

Public participation is very important to the Board. Members of the public should not be afraid to comment on matters before the Board, even if they do not fully understand the applicable law. However, public participation is hampered by an individual's or a group's disruptive conduct. It is not the intent of the Board to use its contempt powers (including attorney's fee orders) before providing a warning and allowing an opportunity to correct the conduct and avoid contempt proceedings. Additional information on Board meeting conduct is available on our website:

<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/Board/Meetings/conduct.htm>

Agenda items are numbered for identification purposes and will not necessarily be considered in the order listed.

**RULES FOR LATE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN MATERIALS:** This paragraph applies only if there are no deadlines for written testimony or comments in a separate hearing notice for an item. Written material received after the due date on the first page of the agenda and before noon on the Monday of board meeting week generally will not be provided to Board members until the day of the meeting, but will become part of the record unless the Chair rules that the late submission would prejudice the Central Coast Water Board staff or any party. Written material received after noon on the Monday of board meeting week will not be provided to Board members or become part of the record, unless the Chair approves the late submission. The Chair will not approve a late submission if doing so would prejudice any party (including Central Coast Water Board staff) or the Board, but may modify this rule if a party demonstrates severe hardship. The Chair will rule at or before the hearing. Late submissions that consist of evidence (as opposed to policy statements or comments) will generally be deemed prejudicial unless all designated parties (see below) have time to consider the evidence before the meeting.

The Board and staff welcome information on pertinent issues, but comments at the meeting should be brief and directed to specifics of the case to enable the Board to take the appropriate action. Whenever possible, lengthy testimony should be presented to the Board in writing before the meeting and only a summary of pertinent points presented orally. In order to give everyone an opportunity to be heard, comments should have been previously submitted in writing and a time limit on presentations may be imposed on any agenda item. Speakers should plan to summarize key points within three minutes. You will need to receive approval from the Chair prior to meetings to speak for longer than three minutes. Please make your request to the Executive Officer at least a week before the meeting.

Material presented to the Board as part of testimony (e.g., photographs, slides, charts, diagrams, etc.) must be left with Executive Assistant Carol Hewitt. Photographs or slides of large exhibits are acceptable. If you plan to use visual aids such as PowerPoint, contact the Central Coast Water Board staff prior to the meeting to arrange for equipment set-up. You must provide a printed or electronic copy of any PowerPoint presentation.

All Board files, exhibits, and agenda material pertaining to items on this agenda are hereby part of the record.

Any person affected adversely by a decision of the Board may petition the State Water Resources Board (State Water Board) to review the decision. The petition must be received by the State Water Board within 30 days of the Central Coast Water Board action (i.e., the meeting date). Copies of the law and regulations applicable to filing petitions will be provided upon request and are available on the State Water Board website, [www.waterboards.ca.gov](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov).

A copy of the procedures governing Water Board meetings may be found at Title 23, California Code of Regulations, Section 647 et seq., and is available upon request.

Hearings before the Central Coast Water Board are conducted under Government Code Section 11400 et seq. but not Government Code Section 11500 et seq.

If any disabled person requires specific accommodations to participate in the Board meeting, please contact John Goni (805) 542-4628 at least seven days prior to the meeting.

All persons who actively support or oppose the adoption of waste discharge requirements or an NPDES permit pending before the Regional Board must submit a statement to the Board disclosing any contributions of \$100 or more to be used in a federal, state, or local election, made by the action supporter or opponent, or his or her agent within the last 12 months to any Central Coast Water Board member.

Also, all permit applicants and all persons who actively support or oppose adoption of a set of waste discharge requirements or an NPDES permit pending before the Regional Board are prohibited from making a contribution of \$100 or more to any Board Member for three months following a Regional Board decision on the permit application.

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